



State Representative

Sandy Nafis

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Serving the 27th District - Newington

Session 2006

Dear Friends:

The 2006 Session of the legislature has come to a close. The fiscal year ended with a large surplus, which was responsibly dedicated to our towns for property tax relief (\$33 million), our teachers' retirement fund (\$245 million), and our rainy day fund for emergencies (\$305.1 million).

Legislation was passed to overhaul our aging transportation system and to create jobs in Connecticut. We protected the ConnPACE program and the benefits our seniors receive, as well as veterans. In addition, we maintained a commitment to quality education for our children while protecting programs such as school readiness, special education and adult education.

As always, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your representative. Together we make a difference, not only for the people of the 27th district, but for all the people of Connecticut. Please contact me at 240-8585 with any questions or concerns, or if there is anything I can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Sandy

2006-2007 STATE MONEY FOR NEWINGTON!

State funds allocated to Newington amount to **\$13,053,488** - up from last year's **\$12,603,860**, an increase of **\$449,628** - or **3.6%**!

PILOT: State Owned Property	\$810,986
PILOT: Colleges & Hospitals	\$489,639
Pequot/Mohegan Aid	\$297,993
Town Aid Road Fund	\$212,986
Local Capital Improvement Program	\$209,355
Education Cost Sharing (ECS)	\$10,386,893
Adult Education	\$23,266
School Transportation (Public)	\$355,077
School Transportation (Private)	\$10,911
Additional Special Education	\$106,224
Property Tax Relief	\$150,157

Consumer News

The legislature passed several bills to protect the citizens of Connecticut from consumer fraud and identity theft. Some of these bills will:

- Make it illegal to send e-mail messages with the intent to solicit information such as Social Security numbers or bank account information by pretending to be an on-line business (Public Act 06-50)
- Protect consumers from having their telephone records sold, obtained or received without their consent (Public Act 06-96)
- Protect consumers from sellers of air bags that do not meet the federal safety standards (Public Act 06-25)
- Protect purchasers of prepaid funeral contracts through escrow accounts and notification of a change in ownership or closing of a funeral home (Public Act 06-87)
- Ensure that both member and non-member prices for gas are similarly posted (Public Act 06-29)
- Make it illegal to obtain the information on the electronic strip of a credit card or transfer that information to another card without the permission of the owner (Public Act 06-60)
- Require home heating oil and propane suppliers to fully disclose in writing all of the purchaser's costs (Public Act 06-65)
- Require a retailer to give a free item (consumer commodities valued up to \$20) if the customer is charged more than the item's posted price (Public Act 06-66)

Tax Relief

For Residents

- **NO** new taxes
- **\$500** credit on state income tax for property taxes paid on cars or home
- **WEATHERIZATION SALES TAX EXEMPTION** extended from June 1, 2006 - July 30, 2007. For more information: www.energystar.gov and www.ct.gov/DRS (Public Act 06-187)
- **CT INCOME TAX DEDUCTION** for contributions made to CHET, the Connecticut Higher Education Trust program for investing in college education - single filers may deduct up to \$5,000 and joint filers up to \$10,000

For Businesses

We must also continue our focus on job creation and retention. Our 21st Century Plan (Public Act 06-83) includes:

- **ELIMINATION** of the 15% corporation tax surcharge for 2007
- **ELIMINATION** of the Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment property tax over five years to attract more manufacturing jobs
- **NEW TAX CREDITS** for movie and digital media productions in Connecticut



Model Guidelines for Volunteer Emergency Personnel

This year we enacted a law requiring the state fire administrator to develop model guidelines by January 1, 2007, that municipalities with paid or volunteer emergency personnel may use to enter into agreements allowing people to serve as volunteer emergency personnel during their personal time. (Public Act 06-22)

Health and Safety

Health Insurance Coverage for Breast Cancer Screening - Breast cancer affects all of us. This year, we improved healthcare access by expanding the conditions under which a health insurance policy must provide coverage for breast cancer screening. (Public Act 06-38)

Direct Access to Physical Therapist - Patients now may go to see a physical therapist without first being referred by another healthcare professional. Physical therapists must meet specific criteria, and workers' compensation injuries and specific kinds of spinal manipulation must have physician referral. (Public Act 06-125)

Hospital Acquired Infections - In response to the concerns of the residents of the state, the General Assembly formed a Committee on Healthcare Associated Infections. This committee will advise the Department of Public Health on developing a mandatory reporting system for hospital associated infections. This will go far in increasing patient safety during hospital stays by holding hospitals accountable for the spread of disease. (Public Act 06-142)

Supervision of Physician Assistants - Public Act 06-110 revises the requirements for supervision of physician assistants in hospital settings. This bill strengthens the supervision of physician assistants by ensuring that the supervisions are active and direct, thereby increasing the quality of care that the physician assistant provides.



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Veterans

Wartime Service Medals



Last year the legislature approved legislation which created a wartime service medal for all veterans who were residents of the state when called to active duty or who are residents at the time of receipt of the medal.

Eligible veterans may request awarding of the Wartime Service Medal by submitting an application form to the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs, accompanied by a DD Form 214 or other documentation, to prove eligibility. Application forms and additional information are available from the department's website at www.ct.gov/ctva or by calling 1-866-928-8387, extension 5915. Applications may also be obtained at the department's district and satellite offices.

The names and mailing addresses of all veterans who submit applications for the Wartime Service Medal will also be added to the Connecticut Service Member and Veteran Registry. The registry is used to notify veterans about benefits and other important service-related information. The information contained in the registry is not subject to public disclosure.

Disabled Veterans' Property Tax Exemption

This bill excludes veterans' disability payments when determining income for purposes of income-based property tax exemptions for veterans, the blind, and people with total disabilities. It also requires towns to give a \$1,000 property tax exemption to people who are totally disabled and people who are blind. (Public Act 06-153)

Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit

Fulfilling this session's goal of promoting job creation, Public Act 06-174 fosters skilled job opportunities by expanding the apprenticeship training tax credit to both union and open shop four-year training programs. With a current shortage in skilled workers in the construction trades, expansion of this tax credit is critical to creating a stable pool of highly skilled tradesmen. The tax credit is only available once per apprenticeship at the completion of a four-year program, and is worth either \$4,000 or 50% of the actual wages paid over the four years.

Telecommunications Competition

The General Assembly this session passed the first update to our state's telecommunications laws in more than 12 years. The legislation allows for greater competition among telecommunications companies by allowing them to more freely respond to competition in the marketplace. Specifically, the bill reduces the time-frame under which some companies have to wait to make changes to their prices and services from 21 days to 5 days. While giving companies the ability to more readily respond to offers made by their competitors, the legislation keeps intact DPUC oversight of pricing and service while retaining the state's tough standards for providing quality customer service which apply to telecommunications companies. (Public Act 06-144)

Education

Bullying Policies in Schools

Public Act 06-115, effective July 1, 2006, expands the definition of bullying and includes incidents on a school bus; requires schools to inform students yearly of their reporting policy, including anonymous reporting; and requires intervention for students who repeatedly bully and those who are bullied.

Textbook Accountability

Troubled by the skyrocketing cost of textbooks, the General Assembly passed Public Act 06-103 to provide a level of relief. This law requires textbook publishers to provide additional information to Connecticut university and college faculty, such as the purchase price of the book or books packaged with supplemental materials at the college bookstore and the history of product revisions in order to assist them in decisions on required textbooks. In addition, the bill permits the use of student financial aid for purchasing textbooks at campus bookstores before the receipt of the aid or enables the colleges to make the financial aid available to eligible students prior to the first day of the academic term.



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SANDY NAFIS
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Seniors

Property Tax Freeze Authorized - This act allows towns to freeze property taxes on homes owned by people age 70 or older who have lived in the state at least one year. The freeze can also apply to a surviving spouse who is at least age 62 when the homeowner dies. Homeowners must meet the income limits for the "circuit breaker" program, which gives elderly homeowners a credit against their property taxes. Those income limits are currently \$ 27,700 for individuals and \$ 33,900 for married couples and are adjusted annually for inflation. People whose taxes are frozen can still qualify for other property tax relief programs. Unlike the circuit breaker program, the act does not provide state reimbursement for revenue a town loses by freezing taxes, but it allows the town to put a lien on the property and to set asset limits for eligibility. (Public Act 06-176)

Expansion of State-Funded Elderly Personal Care Assistant Pilot - This successful pilot program will be expanded from 150 to 250. This program allows seniors to hire their own attendant instead of going through a home health agency.

Medicare Part D - In continued response to the deficiencies of the federal Medicare Part D Program, the General Assembly has set up a process through the state's new Medicare Part D supplemental needs fund to provide additional services to the state's seniors. The state will now pay claims for prescription drugs for Medicare-Medicaid dually eligible or ConnPACE clients who are denied coverage because the drug is not on the plan's formulary if it is medically necessary.

Long-Term Care Comprehensive Needs Assessment - A new long-term care comprehensive needs assessment will be done by the Commission on Aging. The assessment will determine the unmet long-term needs and will project future demands for services. (Public Act 06-188)

Protecting Working Seniors - People who worked long and hard faced a dollar-for-dollar reduction in their Social Security benefits if they became eligible for workers' compensation total disability benefits. We repealed the offset, thereby allowing injured workers to collect full workers' compensation benefits and Social Security. (Public Act 06-84)

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